PERSONNEL INSIGHTS

Comments From Our Technical Director

We are quickly approaching deployment to the Modern System – an event we have all been eagerly awaiting. This conversion is one the most significant events to occur in civilian personnel and I'd like to take this opportunity to once again re-emphasize procedures established by HQ USAF and MAJCOMs to minimize the projected or "pipeline" personnel actions to ensure an orderly transition.

√   16 Jan 02 – Last day to submit PCS order requests for CAO
√   22 Jan 02 – Last day AFPC staffing will receive CAO actions with effective date of 27 Jan 02 or earlier
√   25 Jan 02 – Last day AFPC/DPC/DPK will accept fill actions via the FPIs
√   01 Feb 02 – Any staffing action received after this date will be returned and this will become a pipeline action for the CPF to reinput upon completion of deployment
√   08 Feb 02 – Last day AFPC staffing will input actions with a 10 Feb 02 or earlier effective date. Additionally, this is the last day to input PEPs into DCPDS.

From 10 Feb 02 through 8 Mar 02, no actions or database updates will be processed for CPFs unless they are "emergency actions." Emergency actions are: Leave Without Pay, Change to Lower Grade (adverse action), Furlough, Suspension, Retirement, Death, Return to Duty, Resignation, Termination, Separation, Extension (to keep employees from dropping off the rolls) and Removal.

We need your help in keeping with these timelines to have a successful conversion!

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Employee Member Self Service (E/MSS)

The Defense Financial Accounting System (DFAS) allows its customers to make changes directly to their own pay accounts in a secure electronic environment. E/MSS is an innovative, automated system that puts you in control of processing certain discretionary pay data items without using paper forms. Civilian employees can also get the last three pay statements using E/MSS. The benefits of using E/MSS are many--it saves time and eliminates the need to write letters or fill out forms by letting employees make their own changes immediately with user-friendly technology. E/MSS is convenient and can be accessed nearly 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to change or review the most current information or to check the most recent pay statement. E/MSS is reliable and has the same procedural checks for accuracy as the paper forms.

DFAS centralized Customer Support Unit can help employees with problems using E/MSS. To find out more about how to use this system, employees may inquire at web site http://emss.dfas.mil./. The "how to" and many Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) are listed at this web site. There are a variety of discretionary payroll items that can be changed using E/MSS, such as savings bonds, tax withholding, and allotments. They can be reached toll-free at 1-800-390-2348 or commercial at (216) 522-5122. The support line is available Monday through Friday, 7:00 AM to 7:30 PM, Eastern Standard Time.
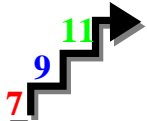
To Target or Not to Target?

That is the question! The Delegated Examining Office (DEO) receives many requests to fill positions that have been restructured to developmental positions. For the most part, this is because the position is hard-to-fill and candidates qualified at the full performance level cannot be located. However, these requests usually ask for a referral certificate at each grade level (e.g., GS-07, GS-09 and GS-11). In the DEO, dual certification is a mandatory process that allows candidates to be referred at any and all grade levels for which they qualify, not just at the highest grade level or the grade level that commensurate with the applicant's current salary. This causes many of the same candidates (qualified at the higher grade) to also appear on referral certificates at the lower grade. In essence, there is very little difference in candidates from one certificate to the other.

There are several advantages to filling a position at the lower grade, especially a hard-to-fill position. One is the stability resulting from the promotion incentive offered the employee--they stay around longer! Another advantage is spending less civilian pay monies at the lower grade and recouping the PCS expenses often associated with filling these positions--your FM will like you! Finally, recruiting at the lower grade adds to the Air Force workforce in general, rather than just "robbing Peter to pay Paul"--the losing installation will like you! Many of these positions are prime for recruiting college graduates at the GS-07 level. Qualification standards for professional positions allow candidates to qualify at the GS-07 level based on experience, one year of graduate level education, or Superior Academic Achievement (SAA). Any of these methods produce highly qualified candidates.

When you submit your next DEO request for a position that has been restructured to the entry grade, consider requesting recruitment at the entry grade level only, rather than at all grade levels. This may result in fewer declinations, better quality of candidates and avoid the duplication of names on certificates.

Alert--Employee SF 50s

There are over 2200 SF 50s in the PPI/ FPI Regional Application print queue, some over three years old. These are the employee copies of the SF 50s and should be furnished to the employees by the supervisor or the CPF (depending on local policy). Appropriate officials are encouraged to print the copies from the print queue to ensure the employees get their copies. After deployment of the Modern System in February 2002, the print queue will no longer be accessible. Employees will still be able to access SF 50s through the AFPC Web Page.

Quality Control for All PARs

Staffers are not the only folks in Personnel that are responsible for the quality execution of Personnel Action Requests (PARs). Other functional specialists also initiate PARs or have critical information to code on PARs (i.e., position data input by Classification functions and award or adverse actions input by Employee Relation functions). When those personnelists responsible for inputting this data perform a careful quality control, it avoids delays in processing, allows employees to EOD more quickly on correct positions, and allows employees to receive the benefits of their earned awards for their contributions. All Air Force personnelists have a piece of the pie when it comes to quality control of creating and processing PARs.

It has been Quite a Year!
…But Wait till next Year!!

CY01 has been a very busy year for the RIF Unit. It has been a record year (in its short three year history as a centralized unit) in conducting RIFs. This is what we accomplished:

- Total RIFs: 133
- Total A-76 related: 72
- Total bases involved: 53
- Total employees impacted: 2703
- Total positions abolished: 3118

Unfortunately, as Mark McGuire found out this year, records are made to be broken. It looks like this one won't stand for long. So far, we have received (or have been informed about) another 33 RIFs that will impact 2042 positions so far for CY02, and it is not even January yet. We estimate well over 200 RIFs in CY02.
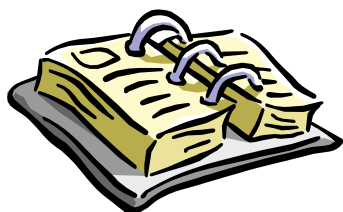
120 Days Mean *120 Days*

The RIF Unit needs your help. We continue to get RIF request packages with insufficient time to process all the actions necessary for a valid RIF. This has been an on-going problem since the RIF Unit has been established and the problem continues to worsen. We must have a minimum of 120 days (60 days to processing time, and 60 day notice) to accomplish a RIF. This is especially important when MAJCOMs conduct command-wide CS&P studies they want effective at several bases on the same day. Those of you that have done one know that 60 days is not an excessive amount of time to process a RIF. During this approximate eight-week period, we accomplish five milestones.
  - Milestone 1 (weeks 1 & 2): QC Review of all RIF retention factors
  - Milestone 2 (weeks 3 & 4): Corrections/changes input into database (sometimes requiring obtaining documentation from the CPFs)
  - Milestone 3 (weeks 5 & 6): Run the RIF and determine assignments
  - Milestone 4 (week 7): Issue Actions Report and resolve issues or disagreements on placements with the CPF
  - Milestone 5 (week 8): Issue Notices (NLT 65 days before effective date)

We need all 60 days for processing time. It is impossible for us to reach our milestones more quickly. As a result, the complete official RIF request package (with all attachments) must be received by AFPC at least 120 days prior to the effective date of the RIF to allow for 60-day notices. You must submit them earlier if your base has negotiated a longer notice period (i.e., 180 days prior to the effective date when the RIF requires 120 day notices). There is no "wiggle" room.

So, 120 days really does mean 120 days. If the packages come in late, we have to push back the RIF effective date to give us the time we need to process it. Please help us meet your requested effective dates by getting your RIF request packages with all required documents in on time.

Pre-Positioned Resumes

Starting 14 December 2001, AFPC began requiring applicants to have resumes on file before self-nominating for vacancy announcements. This will allow staffers to begin working referrals immediately after announcements close, rather than waiting up to a week for applicants who submitted a resume at the same time they self-nominated. As a reminder, applicants can self-nominate via the web or Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS). If there is a problem with one system, the other is still available to applicants.

Preparation for the Modern Defense Civilian Personnel Data Systems (m-DCPDS) Conversion

Air Force converts from Legacy DCPDS to Modern DCPDS on 15 Feb 02. Here at AFPC, we are busily working to clean up pipeline actions, correcting any database errors, and setting up a working group to create replacement RPAs for the open PARs at AFPC. From 10 to 13 December, AFPC hosted MAJCOM representatives to work on the 2nd Mock Conversion, which gave us an idea of what issues we may face when we actually convert. CPFs can help by monitoring not to exceed (NTE) dates (e.g., LWOP and temporary promotions)

and ensuring PARs for NTE actions expiring before FOC are submitted in advance. How can you run a suspense report? Open PPIs, go to Regional Application, select Reports, and select Suspense Action Report. Choose a Sort (e.g., alpha) and Items (e.g., Command [MAJCOM]) if you'd like, and Process the report. Don't forget to use the right format, including the dashes, for the dates (e.g., 14-JAN-2002). Unfortunately, the PPI Suspense Report does not provide information on VRA conversions or suspensions.

Lump-Sum Leave for LWOP-US

Did you know that employees going on LWOP-US or Separation-US for active duty could request payment of lump-sum annual leave? That question is on the Benefits and Entitlements (B&E) checklist that the employee completes prior to departure. If the employee says, " yes," the office that generates the PAR/RPA must type the remark "Lump-Sum payment to be made for any unused annual leave" either in the notes area or on page 4 of the PAR/RPA. If said office fails to add the remark, the employee will not get paid in a timely manner. The servicing staffing team at the Center does not know what the employee requested because they do not get the checklist. The checklist is forwarded to the B&E fax server. However, if the remark is there, the staffing team will know to fax the SF 50 to payroll to assure the employee gets paid.

Quick Info

Did You Know You Can Register on line for Career Programs?
http://www.afpc.randoph.af.mil/cp

Services Directory
AFPC Civilian Employment Internet Addresses
Civilian Employment Home Page:
https://ww2.afpc.randolph.af.mil/resweb/
Directorate of Civilian Personnel Home Page: http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/dpc

Office of Personnel Management (OPM)
Home Page - http://www.opm.gov
Human Resources References - http://www.opm.gov/references/
USAJobs - http://www.usajobs.opm.gov
Veterans - http://www.opm.gov/veterans/
VetGuide/VetsInfo Guide - http://www.opm.gov/veterans/index.htm
People With Disabilities - http://www.opm.gov/disability/
Students - http://www.studentjobs.gov
Reduction In Force (RIF) - http://www.opm.gov/rif/general/rifmenu.htm
Retraining Centers "One-Stop Centers" -
http://www.opm.gov/rif/general/onestop.htm

Other Information
Veteran's Preference Advisor -
http://www.dol.gov/dol/vets/public/programs/programs/preference/main.htm
America's Job Bank - http://www.ajb.org
Dept of Veterans Affairs - http://www.va.gov/
Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) - http://www.dfas.mil
Employee/Member Self Service (E/MSS) system -   http://www.dfas.mil/emss/

Formatted: Bullets and Numbering